

PARASITIC INFECTIONS IN THE BLOOD OF THE BROWN TREE SNAKE, *BOIGA IRREGULARIS*, IN AUSTRALASIA

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A survey of parasitic infections of native reptiles, including the brown tree snake, *Boiga irregularis*, was done to describe their common parasites and to identify organisms that may be potential biological population control agents. We have targeted related colubrids, and sympatric boids and elapids that have dietary overlap with *B. irregularis*. Sympatric lizards, prey species of juvenile *B. irregularis*, have also been screened. Reptiles have been collected from diverse locations in Queensland and the Northern Territory of Australia. Evaluation of blood smears from 329 reptiles revealed infections by gamonts of *Haemogregarina* spp. in the erythrocytes of many snakes and lizards. In contrast,

blood smears obtained from 22 feral *B. irregularis* collected in Guam were free of these parasites. The life cycles of these parasites and their effects on the hosts are being examined.